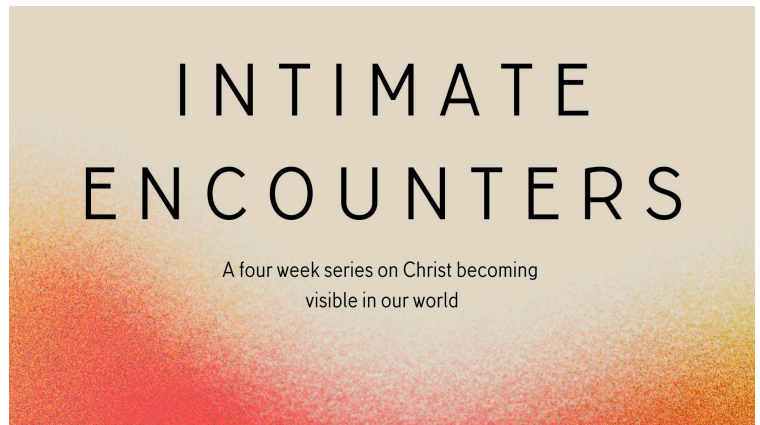


Royal Redeemer Going Deeper Guide

Based on the sermon for January 5, 2025
Intimate Encounters: Incarnate Son



For personal reflection or for use as a devotion with a CGS Community or family

- **Begin by reflecting on/sharing a high and/or a low from your week**

- **CONNECT**

- Can you think of a time when someone went out of their way to include you or make you feel welcome? How did that experience affect you?

- **GROW**

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, “Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.”

3 When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. 4 When he had called together all the people’s chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born. 5 “In Bethlehem in Judea,” they replied, “for this is what the prophet has written:

*6 “But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for out of you will come a ruler
who will shepherd my people Israel.”*

7 Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. 8 He sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him.”

9 After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. 10 When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. 11 On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. 12 And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

Matthew 2:1-12

- Share any words or phrases that speak into your life today.
- Who were the Magi, and what might their journey from the East symbolize about God’s intention to reveal Christ to all people?
- How does the prophecy from Micah (quoted in verse 6) shape our understanding of Jesus’ role and mission?

- o The Magi saw a star and interpreted it as a sign of the birth of a king. What does this reveal about how God communicates with people in ways they can understand?
- o Herod reacts to the news of Jesus' birth with fear and deception. What does his response teach us about the human tendency to resist God's Kingdom when it challenges our own authority?
- o The religious leaders knew where the Messiah would be born but didn't join the Magi in seeking Him. How might we guard against knowing about Jesus but failing to pursue a relationship with Him?
- o The Magi worshipped Jesus and offered Him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. What do these gifts symbolize, and how do they reflect the Magi's recognition of who Jesus is?
- o How does the contrast between the Magi's joyful worship and Herod's hostility highlight the inclusivity of God's Kingdom?
- o The Magi returned home "by another route" after being warned in a dream. How might an encounter with Christ cause us to change direction in our lives?

- **SERVE** *others*

- Epiphany celebrates the revelation of Christ to all people, erasing divisions. In what ways can you reflect this truth in your life by welcoming and sharing the love of Christ with those who are different from you?

- **End with Prayer, the Lord's Prayer, or a short Blessing**